

# Whatever Tokyo Does, They Are Good Americans

THE Japanese government has modified its plan to detain Americans in Japan as "hostages." The plan immediately affected about 100 Americans who had made all arrangements for departure. Now it is announced that twenty-six United States embassy and consular officials will be permitted to sail for Shanghai. No announcement yet about the other detainees.

Why it was deemed expedient to keep any Americans from leaving Japan, or on what account any were to be held as hostages, is not at all clear at this distance. The idea must have originated in the more childish, and perhaps more febrile minds employed on problems of government. We cannot guess what concessions were expected of the United States to win release of its nationals. If meant to force a more favorable American attitude toward Japan, the move was badly designed.

There are many Japanese, aliens ineligible for citizenship, in the United States. Those who came here, came of their own free-will and are at liberty to depart when they please. None would be detained by government as hostages or for any other reason, except violation of law. As for that, these people constitute, in the whole, just about the most orderly and law-abiding alien group in the land.

Children of Japanese parents have for years had the benefit of the American system of free education. Those born in this country automatically become citizens at the age of 21. So far, and with rare individual exceptions, they have shown themselves worthy citizens; appreciative both of the privileges and the responsibilities of citizenship.

These young men and women and children of Japanese parents are in this country by right of birth. They belong here; all of them know it, and most of them truly feel it. They think of their "old country," the land of their forebears, only as other Americans of foreign ancestry think; perhaps with inherent reverence, but with no sense of loyalty or of divided loyalty.

If any alien Japanese in this country wish to leave it, the government, as has been said, will not detain them; no one will say them nay. But no one would hasten their departure. Through the course of recent years, old prejudices, once rampant on the Pacific Coast, have abated. Good behavior of the older Japanese and the increasingly wholesome influence of their American-born children have effected a great change for the better.

These are things for all Americans to remember and govern speech and action accordingly, no matter what didoes the Tokyo government may cut, nor how severe the strain upon international relations may become.

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## Bad Case Made Worse

SAVAGE reprisals are sure to follow upon the shooting of Pierre Laval. Nazis and Nazified Frenchmen, already engaged in ruthless persecution of all who dissent from the Berlin-Vichy combination, as well as of helpless Jews, are now freshly infuriated; given welcome pretext for indiscriminative vengeance.

Not even those who know him best and who have used him most would be likely to consider Laval the nicest person in occupied or unoccupied France. To those of France who still may whisper of lost freedom, he is a traitor who has earned the worst that might befall him.

But assassination, achieved or attempted, is not a sound political device. The Communist comrade who shot Laval blundered badly. He will pay the extreme penalty, of course; but many others also must die or suffer unjustly in consequence upon his act.

Laval is but one of the number of those joined in the betrayal of France. Whether he dies or lives, the course of France under Nazi rule will not be altered in the least. The situation surely was bad enough. Shooting Laval has made it infinitely worse.

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## Dangerous Days

DANGEROUS days are approaching for motorists in Seattle and the Pacific Northwest. The months of October, November and December are so designated, almost officially, for in those three months will be waged the